

UNITED STATES SENATOR • IOWA

CHUCK GRASSLEY

RANKING MEMBER • SENATE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

<http://grassley.senate.gov>
press_office@grassley.senate.gov

Contact: Jill Kozeny, 202/224-1308
Jill Gerber, 202/224-6522

MEMORANDUM

To: Reporters and Editors
Fr: Jill Gerber, 202/224-6522
Re: President's call for Trade Promotion Authority
Da: Thursday, April 4, 2002

Today President Bush is calling for the Senate to bring Trade Promotion Authority and the Andean Trade Preference Act to the Senate floor by April 22. Sen. Chuck Grassley, ranking member of the Committee on Finance, for months has urged the Senate leadership to schedule a vote on Trade Promotion Authority as soon as possible. In December, the Finance Committee voted 18 to 3 for Trade Promotion Authority legislation authored by Grassley and committee Chairman Max Baucus. Last month, Grassley released a letter to the Senate leadership signed by 26 senators that urged a Trade Promotion Authority vote. Grassley made the following comment on the President's action today.

"The President's right. Every day without Trade Promotion Authority is another day the United States can't fully advance the interests of its farmers, workers and businesses at the negotiating table.

"Our agricultural negotiators are in Geneva now. They're fighting for better market access for our farmers. But without TPA, other countries that want to shield their markets from competition will shape the agenda and timing of these critical talks. This is devastating for America's export-dependent farm economy.

"I recently received a letter about this from Glen Keppy. Glen is a third generation family pork producer from Davenport, Iowa. Glen told me about the huge foreign tariffs on pork – averaging close to 100 percent – and the other foreign trade barriers that hamper his ability to export. According to Glen, 'the only way our family operation will survive over the long term is if we can convince other nations to lower or remove their trade barriers.' If the Senate Democratic leaders won't listen to the President, I hope they listen to the farmers and small business owners who depend on trade to pay the bills.

"Free trade isn't just a matter of economics. It's also key to U.S. foreign policy. Market-opening trade deals with countries like Afghanistan help bring stability and prosperity to oppressed nations. The United States can use its economic leadership to bring more nations into democracy and prosperity. Trade helps us do that."